

SERVICE CENTER UPDATE CONT.

Summer sizzles in Southwest Florida

Lower West Coast Regional Service Center

Hurricane Expos help locals prepare for possible storms

The District, WINK-TV, the Southwest Florida CBS affiliate, and other agencies sponsored a series of Hurricane Expos at area malls in preparation for the 2005 Hurricane Season. During the morning and afternoon forums, meteorologists talked about weather, storm tracking and safety; a representative from the Florida Department of Insurance explained the ins and outs of insurance and a speaker from the construction industry provided information about home inspection and improvements that can ensure additional safety. District staff distributed brochures and shared information about emergency operations before and after storms, as well as flood control.



Sally McPherson from the Lower West Coast Regional Service Center with WINK-TV chief meteorologist Jim Farrell work the Hurricane Expo at Coastland Center Mall in Naples on May 21. Another Expo was held at the Edison Mall in Fort Myers on June 11.



Workers begin dredging organic sediment from the bottom of Lake Trafford. Vegetation will be replanted to restore the lake to a thriving, healthy ecosystem.

Big Cypress Basin Service Center

Park dedication adds to Lake Trafford Restoration Project celebration

On May 21, hundreds of people gathered to celebrate the commencement of Lake Trafford Restoration Project. Students from Lake Trafford Elementary School performed a song and dance in honor of the lake, the ROTC from Immokalee High School held the flag ceremony, the Culinary Arts Classes provided deserts for the barbecue, and local musicians performed.

The county park at Lake Trafford was renamed Ann Olesky Park, after the woman who united the community and elected officials behind the restoration project. The park features a one-lane boat ramp, fishing pier, picnic area and Lake Trafford access, which Olesky was instrumental in planning. Annie, as she was known locally, died of a sudden heart attack in 2004.

Lake Trafford has been plagued by muck accumulations, resulting in poor water quality and loss of natural aquatic habitat. Workers will dredge around the clock to remove approximately 4 million cubic yards – or about 3 feet – of organic sediment from the bottom of Lake Trafford. The water will be treated through a sediment polishing cell and returned to the lake. The \$10.4 million project, administered by the District, is scheduled for completion by August 2008.

Find Freddy!



Where in the District is Freddy?

CLUES:

- Freddy is enjoying the serenity of this quiet waterway, which forms the initial headwaters of the greater Everglades ecosystem.
- The creek is the major water source for Lake Tohopekaliga, which is part of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes. Early Native Americans settled along this creek, giving it special historical significance.
- Adjacent to major tourist attractions and growth areas, it is the last remaining natural area of its size in southwest Orange and northwest Osceola counties.
- Freddy has a big day planned. He'll look for wildlife as he paddles, then spend time hanging about in the hardwood swamp and hiking to the pine islands. He may even try pan-fishing in the channelized five-mile portion of the creek.

Give up? The answer is on the back page.

Lee County briefing gets positive feedback



Tommy Strowd, assistant deputy executive director of the District's Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program Resource Area, is interviewed by media representatives from Southwest Florida during a media tour of Lake Okeechobee, the Caloosahatchee River and the C-43 West Reservoir Acceler8 project on June 13. Strowd was joined by Operations Director Bob Howard and Everglades Division Director Susan Gray to provide aerial tours and briefings on the status of Lake Okeechobee conditions and operations, as well as the progress of the Acceler8 project.

South Florida Water Management District Governing Board Member Alice Carlson was joined by six District staffers, who presented the Lee County Board of County Commissioners status reports on regional conditions and ecosystem restoration project updates following the board's regular weekly meeting in Fort Myers June 14. Following heavy rainfall throughout the region, the commissioners were provided with state-of-the-condition presentations of Lake Okeechobee and the Caloosahatchee Estuary. Commissioners were also presented with information on the status of the C-43 (Caloosahatchee River) West Reservoir Acceler8 Everglades restoration project, as well as an update of the 2005 legislative session as it relates to water resource issues.

Members of local media were given a similar briefing June 13, which garnered accurate newspaper and television coverage of what's happening throughout Southwest Florida regarding rainfall and water management issues.

Carlson has committed to briefing Lee County commissioners on water management issues every other month. "The commissioners were appreciative and impressed by the staff presentations and the scope of the responsibilities that the District shoulders, but reiterated their concerns regarding protection of the Caloosahatchee Estuary," Carlson said. "All the commissioners indicated that they looked forward to the next meeting with us in August."



The Fantastic FIVE

Former South Florida Water Management District Executive Directors, from right, Jack Maloy, Woody Wodraska, Til Creel and Sam Poole gather to wish former District Executive Director Henry Dean (far right) a fond farewell at a recent get-together honoring Dean, who retired in June after 30 years of public service.